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AND RECREATION
ANTIDOTES TO
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AN ADDRESS, DELIVERED IN THE LIVERPOOL INSTITUTE

8TH DECEMBER, 1875,

By SIR HENRY COLE, K.C.B.



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ANTIDOTES TO VICE.

THE Directors of this Institution have put into my hands a printed pamphlet suggesting the duties which I have to perform this evening. I find an appropriate text at the beginning of this little pamphlet. Sir Thomas Wyse, in 1837, said, if not in this very room, yet in the presence of some of the gentlemen whose heads are now as white as my own :—"The time is fast approaching when your institution will be an example, not scoffed at, not doubted, not dreaded, but imitated ; when, no longer single, you will be enabled, looking around from this spot, to count your progeny rising up in every direction, like that of the celebrated Asiatic tree, whose seed, wherever they fall, spring up in forests each nobler and more fruitful than its parent." Sir Thomas Wyse was a prophet, and his prophecy has been amply fulfilled. But Sir Thomas did not contemplate that those things which somebody has called "godless" things should be in intimate alliance with the old and venerated Universities of Oxford and of Cambridge ; that they should

be in alliance with the Society of Arts, and, finally, that they should ally themselves with Government and receive prizes from the Science and Art Department.

The prizes of this evening refer to general education and to Art. They refer also to chemistry, physical geography, mechanics, and natural history; but there appear to me to be some omissions. I am supposed to have the art of saying disagreeable things, and not always preaching smooth things, and I hope the directors will excuse me if I point out one or two things in which I think the institution is deficient. You cannot go into any school in Germany, or into any institute resembling this, without finding that one of the things taught, and taught most efficiently, is Music. The same thing happens in Switzerland and in Holland; it happens somewhat less in France; it happens more or less in Italy; but, undoubtedly, you will find throughout the length and breadth of Europe that Music forms part of education. Three hundred years since, when Liverpool existed in some kind of shape, every gentleman was supposed to know Music, and I have no doubt that then the singing in the churches—there were few, if any, dissenting chapels—was much more effective than it is now: undoubtedly England was once called a musical nation, and at that time people had their glees and madrigals, which contributed to the happiness of men and women. I would therefore ask the directors why Music is not taught in this institution? Somebody has said there is no time. There is more than enough time, and the fact is that if you did not go on grinding away at all sorts of things which men and women little understand or care for, you would have plenty of time for Music. If the directors would take up Music as a science and art, they

would greatly increase the numbers attending the school. There are some special local reasons why they should do this. There is a movement started in Liverpool for finding out Liverpool lads and lasses to whom Heaven has given the genius of Music, and for having them properly trained at the National Training School for Music. England is perhaps the only civilised country in Europe at present which has not a system of finding out its musical genius. No doubt you will find a great deal of that genius in Liverpool, and I have expectations that before I leave the town, it will be announced that some patriotic gentlemen have determined that, at least, six free scholarships shall be founded for obtaining the best musical talent. I shall be greatly surprised if the number does not increase. Surely the Institute will establish one scholarship for youths and another for girls. If people do not now understand the virtue of getting a living by the musical abilities which God has given them, they will find it out sooner or later.

During the last session, Parliament—and Lord Sandon had a great deal to do with the business—determined that every child in the public elementary schools who was taught singing could earn a shilling. What does that mean? Why, it means that if two millions of children are all taught singing, they will draw a sum of £100,000 from public taxation to promote Music. Are you going to be laggard on this question, which the Government is trying to get every child to take up?

Then again, in almost every place in Germany you find that the boys and girls are taught drill and gymnastics. If you want to make your young men strong and patriotic, so that they can fight as patriots, and say to the whole world,

“Don’t come troubling us, or we will give you a warm reception if you do,” you ought to take up systematic drilling. They are all cultivated gentlemen at this institution; but remember this drilling is being established also among two millions of the poorer classes who are sent to public elementary schools. Surely you are not going to be behind-hand in this matter!

The Institute is already in alliance with the Society of Arts, and that Society gives prizes. It has recently re-arranged its curriculum of subjects for which it gives prizes, and has introduced the subject of Health, the subject of Cookery, and other branches of Domestic Economy. Now, I am told that some ladies are coming up to receive prizes in Drawing; perhaps there may be one or two who are coming up to receive prizes in general education; but I fear none of them will come up for prizes in Science, and therefore I venture to suggest to the directors that they should pay attention to this new programme of the Society of Arts, which is pre-eminently intended for the benefit of women, by fostering a knowledge of Clothing and its materials, Cookery, Health, Housekeeping, and thrift and care. These subjects are also matters of elementary education; and in any school where a child has passed what is called the Fourth Standard—if it can be certified as knowing about clothing, the making-up of dresses, shirts, and things of the kind, together with cookery—that school gets four shillings a year for that child out of the pockets of the tax-payers. These are subjects peculiarly suited to the Blackburne House School for girls.

Well, I believe I have now got to the end of my fault-finding, and I am going into some other points for your

consideration. No doubt all the classical young gentlemen taught in this institution have heard of "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." Possibly they may know or have had their attention directed to the fact that other nations besides Rome have declined and fallen—Egypt and Greece, and perhaps there are some nations declining now, say the Turks. Heaven only knows if we English are; but I do think that the points which must lead to the decline of a people are those which might as well be called to the attention of youth as the abstract and past theory of "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." I do not know whether or not any of you have been asked if you think England has got to its climax, or whether you can see any symptoms going on now which will lead people to think that England is going to decline. I say, at once, I do not believe she is at present; but there are a number of plague spots about England which, if not taken in hand in time, must inevitably lead to the decline of the country.

There is Pauperism; and in that respect, I am told, Liverpool is not a bit better, but perhaps a little worse, than the average of towns in the country. Then there is the great ignorance which prevails; one class knowing nothing about other classes. I ask how much your wives know about their domestic servants. And yet, if you do not know anything about those who live in your own houses, how can you know anything of others who are not living in your houses, yet moving all around you.

There is another question which I suppose even school boys may learn a little about, and that is Labour and Capital, as it is called; and, without vouching for my entire faith in the statement it contains, I will read you an extract from

a letter written by Thomas Carlyle. Mr. Carlyle, who was eighty years of age last Saturday, wrote:—"The look of England is to me at this moment abundantly ominous; the question of Capital and Labour growing ever more anarchic—insoluble altogether by the notions hitherto applied to it; pretty certain to issue in petroleum one day, unless some other gospel than that of the 'dismal science' come to illuminate it. Two things are pretty sure to me: the first is, that 'Capital and Labour' never can or will agree together till they both first of all decide on doing their work faithfully throughout, and like men of conscience and honour, whose highest aim is to behave like faithful citizens of this universe and obey the Eternal Commandment of Almighty God who made them. The second thing is, that a sadder object than even that of the 'coal strike,' or any conceivable strike, is the fact that, loosely speaking, we may say all England has decided that the profitablest way is to do its work ill, slimly, swiftly, and mendaciously. What a contrast between now, and say only a hundred years ago! At that latter date, or, still more conspicuously, for ages before that, all England awoke to its work with an invocation to the Eternal Maker to bless them in their day's labour and help them to do it well; now, all England, shopkeepers, workmen, all manner of competing labourers awaken as if with an unspoken, but heartfelt prayer to Beelzebub, 'Oh, help us thou great lord of shoddy, adulteration, and mal-feasance to do our work with the maximum of slimness, swiftness, profit, and mendacity—for the Devil's sake, amen!'" Now, it is for you to reflect if there is any truth in that. It is a fine utterance in its way, and, perhaps, you will excuse me for introducing it.

You know the differences that exist between classes and their mutual ignorance of each other ; and I am going to read another passage, written some fifty years ago. They are lines which I thought at the time they were written had a good deal of truth in them, but which, I am happy to say, have a little less truth now :—

The poor man's sins are glaring ;
In the face of ghostly warning
He is caught in the fact
Of an overt act—
Buying greens on Sunday morning.

The rich man's sins are hidden,
In the pomp of wealth and station ;
And escape the sight
Of the children of light,
Who are wise in their generation.

The rich man has a kitchen,
And cooks to dress his dinner ;
The poor who would roast
To the baker's must post,
And thus becomes a sinner.

The rich man has a cellar,
And a ready butler by him ;
The poor must steer
For his pint of beer
Where the saint can't choose but spy him.

The rich man's painted windows
Hide the concerts of the quality ;
The poor can but share
A crack'd fiddle in the air,
Which offends all sound morality.

The rich man is invisible
In the crowd of his gay society ;
But the poor man's delight
Is a sore in the sight,
And a stench in the nose of piety.

The rich man has a carriage
Where no rude eye can flout him ;
The poor man's bane
Is a third-class train,
With the daylight all about him.

The rich man goes out yachting,
Where sanctity can't pursue him ;
The poor goes afloat
In a fourpenny boat,
Where the bishop groans to view him.

Well, that is a contrast of the pleasures of the rich and the poor, and the lines were written by Thomas Love Peacock, a scholar, novelist, poet, friend of Shelley's, and examiner in the East India Company.

Now I come to another vice, which I look upon as the blackest plague spot, and that is Drunkenness and its consequences. I believe our legislators are beginning to feel that this is a subject which must be encountered in some way or other—that they must no longer say that they can find no remedy, and that England must go to the Devil. Only last week, what said Mr. Cross ?—" Anyone who has looked at the condition of some of our great provincial towns, will feel that the question of raising the character of our people requires the most serious attention. I believe that what has really happened is that, in the north of England especially, a rapid increase of wages has taken place without any corresponding improvement in the education of the people, who, I believe, spend their wages in the public-houses ; but I am sure that this state of things cannot be cured by legislation. I think the only way in which improvement can be effected is to provide the people with better dwellings and better education." I quite agree that better dwellings and better education are necessary ; but I am going to present you with

an example or two that no kind of education can reach ; and what I propose for dealing with them is to go into competition with the Gin Palaces.

Now, I ask even the young gentlemen who attend this institution, What is Liverpool doing in this question of Drunkenness ? Like all mortal things, Liverpool has its good and bad features. It is distinguished for its energy, pluck, and commercial vigour, shown in its magnificent Docks and mercantile marine. In many respects it is in advance of the chaotic Metropolis. There, in municipal government, we are babies. London municipal arrangements do not provide a noble hall like St. George's Hall, with its fine music ; nor baths for all classes, as Liverpool does. The supply of water is abundant in Liverpool, good and cheap ; in London it is dear, difficult to be got at, and for the most part nasty. Londoners are altogether at the mercy of a set of companies, who get their water wherever they can, filled with sewage or otherwise. Liverpool has its museums, picture galleries, and free libraries. Though there are three millions of people in London, they will not listen to any proposal for free libraries. There are only two free municipal libraries in London—one which the city of London has made out of its munificent wealth, and the other which was carried by a fluke, by a Lord Chancellor who packed the meeting, and got the rate laid on. But whilst elements of civilisation are going on in Liverpool, you certainly have that black plague spot of Drunkenness, perhaps more than any town in the country. I have been trying to find out if I had got an exaggerated notion of the drunkenness of Liverpool, but after reading and hearing a great deal, I cannot find that I had ; and I am told that if a gold medal were given for drunkenness, Liver-

pool would obtain it, though I believe Glasgow would run it very hard.

Now, Drunkenness, more than any other cause, occasions mortality, and great praise is due to the Corporation for trying to find out the causes of the mortality. I have read a number of reports of the Health Committee on the subject, and I find that in 1871 the death-rate for the previous ten years in Liverpool was 38 per thousand, whilst in Birkenhead it was only 20. I believe that since that time it has declined, and that the health of the town is improving. The per centage of deaths of children under five years in Liverpool in 1871 was 62—that is, that in a certain part of Liverpool called Scotland Road, out of every hundred babies that were born, 62 died before they reached the age of five. Liverpool gets rid of its children almost as quickly as the Chinese, who drown them like puppies. Liverpool is reported to be declining in cleanliness. A philosopher once said to another, “What is the test of the civilisation of the people?” and the other philosopher, after beating about for a long time, replied, “I have it—the use of soap.” I believe that is true. Now, what said the report of Drs. Parkes and Sanderson, in 1871, on Cleanliness?—“The people are very much dirtier now than they were before.” I was told to-day, on the highest authority I could find in Liverpool, that the people were getting dirtier every day, and it is evident something must be done if possible to cure that. I would read some of the passages in the report I have referred to if I dared; what is said seems almost incredible. One of the facts among people who used to receive 22s. a-week and now receive 30s. is, that “there is little or no furniture in the houses, and no change of clothes for several weeks, the face

and hands only being washed at a fountain." Then there appears to be a class of people that actually seem turned from human beings into no better than brutes: people that spend all their money in drink, and leave their children to go to the workhouse or to die—who starve their wives, beat them, and after having drunk themselves into a state of insanity, habitually sleep without clothes, lying on straw! Now, if you want to see sights in Liverpool that reduce men to the nature of aborigines, you will see people that are allowed to get as drunk as they can, starve their wives and children, looking to others in the end to find coffins for themselves and feed them in the workhouse beforehand. The report goes on to say that there is more drinking now than formerly. Drs. Parkes and Sanderson asked what was to be done; and they say truly that "if this state of things is not righted, it will in some way or other right itself, perhaps at the expense of the whole community." I am, however, happy to say that I have heard of some efforts being made, which are likely to prove successful. A number of kind people have established sheds—I might call them refuges—at the docks, where people can go for warmth and shelter, for a cup of coffee or tea, instead of going to the public-house.

Now, I ask you if the Teachers in the Institute do anything in the way of talking about these things. Does the Institute teach its boys these things that are occurring in their midst, and tell them to think if there be any conceivable means of remedy? I am afraid not; it would be true education to do so. I agree with Mr. Cross that law-making is not going to put Drunkenness down. But it may be possible, if you give consideration to the question, to find out some things that will act as antidotes to Drunkenness; though

seemingly men and things are in conspiracy to make men and women drunk—the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the gentleman brewer and distiller, the justice with his license, privileges, and the tradesman with his greeds and profits.

I then proceed, with all humility, to offer some few little receipts of my own. I have little hope for the class of people, forty years of age, that lay on straw drunk. I do not know what can be done with them ; but if I were potent enough, I would take from their wages something for their wives and children before they had spent all, though that would be interfering with the liberty of the subject. Of course the rising generation going to school will gradually learn to avoid being drunkards, and there is hope in that. The habit of a hundred years ago, when it was polite to be found drunk under the table, has been got over, and now it is a disgrace for anyone calling himself a gentleman to be drunk. Therefore the evil is capable of being cured, and we may look forward to the time when the class a little less than “ gentlemen ” will be cured of the habit.

Healthy dwellings, with a good supply of air and water, under municipal control, would all, of course, help to make people more sober. If the Corporation take up, as I have no doubt they will, Mr. Cross’s Act, it will give better dwellings, and I am told it is just possible to do so not in the neighbourhood of public-houses. I am told that Lord Sefton and other noblemen put in their leases that there shall be no public-houses on their property without their permission ; and, unless all the Corporation are brewers—of which I have no knowledge—they can follow the example. Saltaire, near Bradford, where Sir Titus Salt’s extensive works are, the town itself belonging to him, shows a

most gratifying instance of how the plan works of having no public-houses. But Sir Titus Salt is a burly despot, as his very name proves, and he makes his people healthy, happy, and godly without drink. The pith of my receipt is to make every place more attractive than the public-house, and to encourage the feeling of responsibility amongst all classes that it is a disgrace to get drunk, even in a public-house. I will relate a story to show how it is possible to make a much larger use of churches and chapels, and to attract the people to them. On my advice, in a London church, (Holy Trinity, Brompton,) there was a service held on four successive Tuesday evenings, at which the sermon was compressed into ten minutes, the other portions were as short as the Prayer Book would allow, while the musical part was so arranged that all the congregation might join in it, aided by drums, trumpets, and shawms or trombones. The result was that the church was crowded, and that by thousands not in the habit of attending. I am a great advocate for anything that will bring people together and give them innocent amusement, for when a multitude is drawn together, the company exercise a restraining influence, and men are less likely to appear drunk.

The establishment of Working Men's Clubs throughout the country, managed by a committee of working men, is a good thing, and in those in which the drink is sold the restraining principle that I refer to acts beneficially. Therefore, let there be as many clubs as possible. Then there are the public pleasure grounds, and places where the working men may meet in the winter and hear music ; nor do I object, indeed, to even dancing, for if others dance in public rooms, why not the working man ? But no drunkenness should be allowed ;

any that get drunk, let them be turned out at once "neck and crop," and put in the stocks. As an instance, take the case of the South Kensington Museum, which, during my connection with it, has been visited by over thirteen millions of people, but during that time I have only heard of one person having been turned out for drunkenness, though wine, spirits, and beer are sold there. Now, here is the fact that if people are got to visit these places where they get amusement, and can do pretty much as they like, there is no drunkenness at all. Every town should have its South Kensington Museum; and I hope that when Liverpool has got her Art Gallery, it will be thrown open as soon as possible. I trust, moreover, that the Museum and Gallery will be opened at night. At all events, they might be opened on some evenings of the week; and I have no doubt that for the class above the horrid brutes who sleep without clothes on the straw, the museums and libraries, and other incidental institutions, will prove a great inducement to avoid drunkenness.

With respect to the libraries, let me say a word of thanks to Lord Sandon for what he stated a few days ago—that he looked forward to the time when every Board school would have its library. If every Board school had a library to which people could go in the evening, something would be done to prevent them going into public-houses.

I now approach a subject on which bitter differences of opinion prevail, but I hope I shall not give offence in stating my own views—I mean the use of Sunday. I will not enter on the religious differences involved in Sundays and Sabbaths, or the customs which history has made known to us. I will only attempt truthfully to relate what comes under my own personal experience, especially in London and our great

towns, of the ways in which my countrymen pass Sunday—dividing them into the few rich, the numerous middle-classes, and the overpowering millions of poorer classes. I hate this imperfect nomenclature of classes, and use it only as an expression commonly understood. A rich man with £10,000 a year may be a poor man, and have no money at his bankers, and a poor labouring man, with his 20s. a week, may be a rich man with money in the penny savings-bank. The rich, relieved of their weekly work, go to church (often in their carriages) in the morning, and send their wives and daughters in the afternoon or evening. They frequent their clubs, read the *Saturday Review* or *Economist*, admire and examine the pictures they possess in their gilded homes. They go to the Zoological Gardens, etc. The middle-classes also go to church or chapel, have a good early dinner, with a cozy nap afterwards; take a walk if it be fine, and spend the rest of the day in looking at the pictures in the illustrated newspapers. Both classes give their servants a holiday to go to church or chapel, if they are so minded, or to walk with cousins. I regret to say that all I can see and learn proves to me that the millions of the poorer classes do not go to church or chapel. They spend the forenoon in their only one room if they live in towns, and generally in bed. They read a penny newspaper, which, as a parish missionary told me, is “church, chapel, and Bible to them,” and they pass the evening in the public-house. Do not let us deceive ourselves. The millions of this country have ceased to be attracted by our Protestant churches and chapels, and the law cannot compel them to attend. Our forefathers before the Reformation induced the people to come to churches, and abbeys, and cathedrals, where the poor found music and pictures on the walls and in

the windows. The Roman Catholic Church now makes its way with the people by the same attractions ; and all creeds have done so, whether regulated by Moses among the Israelites or Sesostris among the Egyptians, or by the high priests of Minerva in Athens, or, in subsequent years, by Leo. X. in Rome. Human nature craves for the beautiful works of God and man. The fine arts are the handmaidens of religion and gentle culture. You young students recollect the “*emollit mores*” sentence ! But during the last three centuries in our kingdom we have neglected, if not despised, this craving. Fine arts are now beginning to be recognised again as humanising. If you wish to vanquish Drunkenness and the Devil, make God’s day of rest elevating and refining to the working man ; don’t leave him to find his recreation in bed first, and in the public-house afterwards ; attract him to church or chapel by the earnest and persuasive eloquence of the preacher, restrained within reasonable limits ; help him to solve the mysteries of his daily life by the simple light of his Bible, rather than puzzle and wear him with dogmas spoken during long hours ; give him music in which he may take his part ; shew him pictures of beauty on the walls of churches and chapels ; but, as we cannot live in church or chapel all Sunday, give him his park to walk in, with music in the air ; give him that cricket ground which the martyr, Latimer, advocated ; open all museums of Science and Art after the hours of Divine service ; let the working man get his refreshment there in company with his wife and children, rather than leave him to booze away from them in the Public-house and Gin Palace. The Museum will certainly lead him to wisdom and gentleness, and to Heaven, whilst the latter will lead him to brutality and perdition.

I rejoice greatly in telling you that your neighbour, the Duke of Westminster, with true Christian benevolence and great political foresight socially, opened his palace in London in the months of last August and September, not only on week-days but on Sundays, to the working man, as an experiment, and it proved most successful. His Grace writes thus to me :—"Visitors numbered in the two months 10,560, and the applications were so numerous that the clerk's time was entirely taken up with this work, and we had to say that 'no more could be entertained or tickets issued.' I had no idea that there would have existed so great a desire to see these things, and am heartily glad of it. It shows that if the opportunity could only be given, thousands would gladly avail themselves of visiting to their benefit such collections on, with many of them, the only available days—namely, Sundays, and thereby improving their taste, and assisting towards the instruction much needed. Another year we may make better provision beforehand. Among other applications refused was one for admissions for the Thames barges!" As a general rule, Sundays are the working man's only available days for recreation. The average number of visitors to Grosvenor House on week-days was 143, whilst on Sundays it was 510. I trust other enlightened owners of pictures will follow the Duke of Westminster's lead. In London we are foolish and illogical on this Sunday question. I may go and see pictures freely in Hampton Court Palace, and in Greenwich Hospital, and visit the Natural History Museum in Kew Gardens on Sundays, and hundreds of thousands do so likewise to their great benefit, morally and religiously. It is sheer tyranny to deprive me of going to picture galleries if I wish it, and I protest against such tyranny. I would force no one to

go to Museums who dislikes it ; but why keep me out of the National Gallery, and the British Museum ? and why forbid me seeing Raphael's Bible Cartoons in the South Kensington Museum, if I wish to go ?

